

FIREHOLE RIVER BRIDGE
Yellowstone Roads and Bridges
Spanning Firehole River near
Morning Glory Pool on Grand Loop Road
Yellowstone National Park
Teton County
Wyoming

HAER No. WY-44

HAER
WYO
20-YELNAP,
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BLACK & WHITE PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL & DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
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Rocky Mountain Regional Office
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HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

FIREHOLE RIVER BRIDGE

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Location: Spanning Firehole River near Morning Glory Pool on old Grand Loop Road, Yellowstone National Park, Teton County, Wyoming

Date of Construction: 1935

Owner: Yellowstone National Park, National Park Service

Use: Vehicular bridge

Designer: Bureau of Public Roads

Builder: McLaughlin Construction Company, Livingston, Montana

Significance: Firehole River Bridge typifies the early design philosophy of the National Park Service, which was to use indigenous materials to harmonize man-made features with their natural surroundings. This philosophy is embodied in many of the park's Rustic Style buildings and structures.

Project Information: Documentation of Firehole River Bridge is part of the Yellowstone Roads and Bridges Recording Project, conducted during the summer of 1989 by the Historic American Engineering Record, a division of the National Park Service, under the co-sponsorship of Yellowstone National Park, the NPS Roads and Bridges Program, and the NPS Rocky Mountain Regional Office, Denver. Historical research and written narrative by Mary Shivers Culpin, Historian, NPS Rocky Mountain Regional Office. Engineering description by Stephen M. Varner, Virginia Polytechnic Institute. Edited and transmitted by Lola Bennett, HAER Historian, 1993.

HISTORY OF GRAND LOOP ROAD: MADISON JUNCTION TO OLD FAITHFUL SECTION

(See HAER WY-48, Nez Perce Creek Bridge.)

DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF FIREHOLE RIVER BRIDGE

Firehole River Bridge at Morning Glory Pool carries old Grand Loop Road over Firehole River. The old road has been obliterated and rerouted. The bridge now serves pedestrians and bicycles on a paved path from Old Faithful Geyser to Morning Glory Pool. The bridge was built in 1935 as part of the reconstruction of the Madison Junction to Old Faithful road project.

The bridge is one span with a span length (from center of support to center of support) of 53'. The structure's total length is 58'. The deck width is 33'-0" and the bridge roadway width is 26'-2".¹ The rigid-type bridge had masonry abutments, concrete deck and steel hand rails. The rails are vertical steel posts with channels cupping downward framing into these posts near the top and bottom. Vertical steel rods frame into the posts. The concrete deck has an asphalt surface. McLaughlin Construction Company of Livingston, Montana, built the bridge at a total cost of \$19,677.19.²

C.F. Capes, Bureau of Public Roads Highway Engineer, called the stone masonry work "exceptionally good and of very pleasing appearance. All materials used in the structures were tested before use and are of satisfactory quality".³

ENDNOTES

1. Firehole River Bridge Morning Glory Inventory Report, Engineering and Safety Services Division, National Park Service.

2. F.C. Ammann, "Final Construction Report (1934-1935) Project NR 1-C2, Bridges of The Grand Loop Highway, Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming, 18 April 1936."

3. Memo from C.F. Capes, Bureau of Public Roads to F.E. Ammann, Project Engineer and District Engineer J.A. Elliot, and Yellowstone National Park Superintendent Roger Toll, 12 September 1935.